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to a particular coupler. For example, controllers may determine based upon the valid vector that no caching agent is coupled to a particular coupler and therefore may determine not to issue snooping transactions via such a coupler.

On the other hand, Khare at paragraph [0045] discloses flushing a modified memory block from all caching agents, writing the modified memory block back to memory, and invalidating the cache lines associated with the flushed memory block. Moreover, Khare at paragraph [0029] discloses a snoop filter having a presence vector and a status for each cache line of the system. The presence vector of a cache line tracks which nodes have the corresponding cache line present, whereas the status tracks the state of the cache line in the system (e.g. various MESI states). However, the Applicant is unable to locate a teaching in Khare of a valid vector to track which couplers of a system have caching agents attached.

Applicants wish to further point out that invalidating a cache line state is not the same as indicating that no caching agent is coupled to the coupler. Invalidating a cache line state indicates that the cache line is not present in the associated node. The associated node may still be coupled to the coupler and may still have other cache lines present.

In sum, Khare appears to provide no teaching in regard to a valid vector and appears to provide no teaching in regard to updating the valid vector to indicate that a coupler is no longer associated with one or more a caching agents. The invention of Applicant's claim 13 requires updating a valid vector to indicate that a coupler is no longer associated with one or more caching agents. Accordingly, Khare fails to disclose each and every element of the invention of Applicants' claim 13., and therefore does not

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anticipate the invention of claim 13. Applicants respectfully request allowance of claim 13.

**Claim Rejections under 35 USC 103 (Bealkowski/Khare)**

The Official Action rejected claims 1-12 and 17-27 as being unpatentable over Bealkowski (US Patent 6,282,596) in view of Khare and rejected claims 14-16 as being unpatentable over Khare as applied to claim 13 and in further view of Bealkowski. As indicated above Khare does not qualify as prior art under 35 USC 103 due to common ownership at the time of invention of Application 10/027,397. Accordingly, the proposed combination is improper. Allowance of claims 1-12 and 14-27 is therefore respectfully requested.

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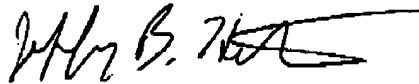
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**Conclusion**

The foregoing is submitted as a full and complete response to the Official Action mailed October 31, 2003. Applicants submit that the pending claims are in condition for allowance. Reconsideration is requested, and allowance of the now pending claims is earnestly solicited.

Should it be determined that an additional fee is due under 37 CFR §§1.16 or 1.17, or any excess fee has been received, please charge that fee or credit the amount of overcharge to deposit account #02-2666. If the Examiner believes that there are any informalities which can be corrected by an Examiner's amendment, a telephone call to the undersigned at (480) 554-4198 is respectfully solicited.

Respectfully submitted,



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